

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 2159

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**Title:** An act relating to record checks of private school educational employees.

**Brief Description:** Requiring record checks of private school educational employees.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Quall, Talcott, Schindler, O'Brien, Esser, Gombosky, Ruderman, Boldt, Haigh, D. Sommers, Dunn, Kagi, Stensen, Kenney, Miloscia, Santos, Tokuda, Lambert, Edwards and Barlean.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Meeting Date:** March 1, 1999.

**Bill Analysis Prepared by:** Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

**Background:** All children from 8 to 17 years old are required to attend public school unless they are enrolled in a private school, are receiving home-based instruction, are attending an education center, are excused by the school district superintendent under certain circumstances, or are at least 16 years old and emancipated.

Private schools must be approved by the State Board of Education and comply with certain statutory requirements. Private schools must annually file a certification with the Superintendent of Public Instruction that the private school meets these minimum statutory requirements, and must develop a process to correct any deficiencies. These requirements include: (1) the school year consists of at least 180 school days; (2) all classroom teachers must be certificated by this state except for teachers of religion courses and others with unusual competence who are supervised by a certificated teacher; and (3) the school facilities must be adequate to meet the program offered by the school and meet reasonable health and safety requirements. The private school curriculum must include instruction in basic skills. Private school students are not required to meet student learning goals, obtain a certificate of mastery, or be assessed under the state assessment program. Private schools are authorized to operate an extension program for parents or legal guardians to teach their children.

Private schools must report information on their students required by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the appropriate educational service district. Private schools must comply with rules relating to private schools promulgated by the State Board of Education.

**Summary of Bill:** By June 30, 1999, all approved private schools must require all employees who regularly have unsupervised access to children to undergo a record check through the Washington State Patrol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

For employees hired before July 1, 1999, the record checks must be completed by September 30, 1999; the state patrol and the Superintendent of Public Instruction cannot charge the schools or employees for these record checks. For employees hired on or after July 1, 1999, the processing of the record checks must begin by September 30, 1999; the schools or the employees pay for these record checks. Applicants may be employed on a conditional basis pending completion of the record check.

***Appropriation:*** The amount of \$750,000.

***Fiscal Note:*** Requested on February 23, 1999.

***Effective Date:*** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.